

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-14 IO-12 AID-20 OMB-01 DPW-01 RSR-01 /127 W

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R 180450 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8800

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR

SUBJECT: PRG PRESS CONFERENCE

PASS USIA, DOD, USDEL FRANCE

1. AS SCHEDULED, GVN ON SATURDAY MORNING ARRANGED TRANSPORTATION FOR SOME SIXTY- FOUR US, BRITISH, FRENCH, GERMAN, AND JAPANESE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS TO CAMP DAVIS TO TAN SON NHUT FOR INITIAL PRG PRESS CONFERENCE.

2. CORRESPONDENTS PRESENT HAVE VARIOUSLY DESCRIBED THE MORE THAN TWO HOUR SESSION WITH PRG DELEGATION CHIEF LT. GENERAL TRAN VAN TRA AS " INTERESTING," " BORING" AND " PROPAGANDA." CORRESPONDENTS WERE OFFERED NORTH VIETNAMESE CIGARETTES WHICH WOULD NOT STAY LIT, SODA POP AND WARM BEER. THEY WERE TOLD THAT MAJOR GENERAL HOA, DRV CHIEF DELEGATE ON THE FPJMC WOULD BE ON HAND NEXT WEEK.

3. TRA PREDICTABLY TOLD THEM THAT THE PRG IS READY TO IMPLEMENT ALL ASPECTS OF THE CEASE- FIRE AGREEMENT. HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAD NO JUSTIFICATION FOR CHARGING THAT THERE HAS BEEN HEAVY INFILTRATION ALONG THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL.

4. ASKED HOW THE PRG RECEIVED SUPPLIES, TRA SAID THAT WAS A MILITARY SECRET. HE DENOUNCED ALLEGED GVN CEASE- FIRE VIOLATIONS.

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TIONS AND UNREELED LONG AND YAWN- PRODUCING STATISTICS CONCERNING THESE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS.

5. COMMENT: OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THIS INITIAL PRG PRESS CONFERENCE WAS ESSENTIALLY WHAT EXPERIENCED CORRESPONDENTS HAD THOUGHT IT WOULD BE, THAT IS, PRIMARILY PROPAGANDA EVEN IN RESPONSE TO THE MORE SEARCHING QUESTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, IN TAKING PRESS CONTACTS WITH THE PRG/ DRV OUT OF THE DOMAIN OF CLANDESTINITY, THE GVN HAS FACILITATED PRESENTATION OF PRG/ DRV SPOKESMEN AND LEADERS AS RATHER SMALL FOLK IN BAGGY CLOTHING, VISIBLY LESS THAN TEN FEET TALL.
BUNKER

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED USDEL FRANCE.

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